



St. Pat's festivities kick off amid tensions in U.S.

MEGHAN BARR
Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — St. Patrick's Day festivities were in full swing Sunday with the usual merriment of bagpipes and beer, but political tensions lingered in the northeastern U.S., where city leaders will be conspicuously absent from parades over gay rights issues. New York City Mayor Bill De Blasio will become the first mayor in decades to sit out the traditional march Monday because parade organizers refuse to let partic-

ipants carry pro-gay signs. Boston Mayor Martin Walsh wasn't marching in his city's parade Sunday, either, after talks broke down that would have allowed a gay group to march. Still, thousands of green-clad spectators came out for the parade in Boston, and organizers of a float intended to promote diversity threw Mardi Gras-type beads at onlookers. A similar scene played out in Philadelphia. Several global landmarks will be bathed in green as

part of a push by Ireland's tourism agency, among them Sleeping Beauty's Castle at Disneyland Paris in France, as well as the French capital's Moulin Rouge nightclub. Other locations transforming at night under green floodlights are the Petrin Lookout Tower in Prague; Rhine Falls near Zurich; the Taj Mahal in India; the London Eye Ferris wheel; Niagara Falls; the Las Vegas welcome sign;

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A group standing for diversity marches in the annual St. Patrick's Day parade in the South Boston neighborhood of Boston, Sunday, March 16, 2014.

Associated Press

U.S. cites security more to censor, deny records

JACK GILLUM

TED BRIDIS

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The Obama administration last year is increasingly censored government files or outright denied access to them under the U.S. Freedom of Information Act, according to a new analysis of federal data by The Associated Press.

The administration cited more legal exceptions it said justified withholding materials and refused a record number of times to turn over files quickly that might be especially newsworthy. Most U.S. agencies also took longer to answer records requests, the analysis found.

The government's responsiveness under the Freedom of Information Act is widely viewed as a barometer of its transparency. Under the law, citizens and foreigners can compel the government to turn over copies of federal records for zero or little cost.

Anyone who seeks information through the law is generally supposed to get it unless disclosure would hurt national security, violate personal privacy or expose business secrets or confidential decision-making in certain areas. The government cited such exceptions a record 546,574 times last year.

The government's own figures from 99 federal agencies covering six years show that half way through its second term, the administration has made few meaningful improvements in the way it releases records despite its promises from Day 1 to become the most transparent administration in history.

In category after category — except for reducing numbers of old requests and a slight increase in how often it waived copying fees — the government's efforts to be more open about its activities last year were their worst since President Barack Obama took office.

In a year of intense public interest over the National



Senate Judiciary Committee Chairman Patrick Leahy, D-Vt., walking through a corridor at the Capitol in Washington.

Security Agency's surveillance programs, the government cited national security to withhold information a record 8,496 times — a 57 percent increase over a year earlier and more than double Obama's first year, when it cited that reason 3,658 times. The Defense Department, including the NSA, and the CIA accounted for nearly all those. The Agriculture Department's Farm Service Agency cited national security six times, the Environmental Protection Agency did twice and the National Park Service once.

And five years after Obama directed agencies to less frequently invoke a "deliberative process" exception to withhold materials describing decision-making behind the scenes, the government did it anyway, a record 81,752 times.

"I'm concerned the growing trend toward relying upon FOIA exemptions to withhold large swaths of government information is hindering the public's right to know," said Sen. Patrick Leahy, chairman of the Senate Judiciary Commit-

tee. "It becomes too much of a temptation. If you screw up in government, just mark it top secret."

Citizens, journalists, businesses and others last year made a record 704,394 requests for information, an 8 percent increase over the previous year. The government responded to 678,391 requests, an increase of 2 percent over the previous year. The AP analysis showed that the government more than ever censored materials it turned over or fully denied access to them, in 244,675 cases or 36 percent of all requests. On 196,034 other occasions, the government said it couldn't find records, a person refused to pay for copies or the government determined the request to be unreasonable or improper.

Sometimes, the government censored only a few words or an employee's phone number, but other times it completely marked out nearly every paragraph on pages.

The White House said the government's figures demonstrate "that agencies

are responding to the president's call for greater transparency." White House spokesman Eric Schultz noted that the government responded to more requests than previously and said it released more information.

"Sunday was the start of Sunshine Week, when American news organizations promote open government and freedom of information.

The chief of the Justice Department's Office of Information Policy, which oversees the open records law, told the Senate last week that some of the 99 agencies in the past five years have released documents in full or in part in more than 90 percent of cases. She noted the record number of requests for government records, which exceeded 700,000 for the first time last year, and said decisions are harder than ever.

"The requests are more complex than they were before," director Melanie Pustay told the Senate Judiciary Committee.

The AP could not determine whether the adminis-

tration was abusing the national security exception or whether the public asked for more documents about sensitive subjects. The NSA said its 138 percent surge in records requests were from people asking whether it had collected their phone or email records, which it generally refuses to confirm or deny. To do otherwise, the NSA said, would pose an "an unacceptable risk" because terrorists could check to see whether the U.S. had detected their activities. It censored records or fully denied access to them in 4,246 out of 4,328 requests, or 98 percent of the time.

Journalists and others who need information quickly to report breaking news fared worse than ever last year. Blocking news organizations from urgently obtaining records about a government scandal or crisis — such as the NSA's phone-records collection, Boston bombings, trouble with its health care website, the deadly shootings at the Washington Navy Yard or the attack on the diplomatic mission in Benghazi — can delay uncovering significant developments until after decisions are made and the public's interest has waned.

The government said the average time it took to answer a records request ranged from less than one day to nearly two years. AP's analysis showed that most agencies took longer to answer requests than the previous year, although the White House said the government responded more quickly and did not immediately explain how it determined that. The Pentagon reported at least two requests still pending after 10 years and the CIA was still working on at least four requests from more than eight years ago. The AP's request to the Health and Human Services Department for contracts with public-relations companies to promote Obama's health care law has been pending for more than one year. □

U.S. rejects Crimea vote, cites Russian intimidation

MATTHEW LEE

AP Diplomatic Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — President Barack Obama told Russian President Vladimir Putin on Sunday that Crimea's vote to secede from Ukraine and join Russia "would never be recognized" by the United States, as he and other top U.S. officials warned Moscow against making further military moves toward southern and eastern Ukraine. The two leaders spoke after residents in Crimea voted overwhelmingly in favor of the split in a referendum that the United States, European Union and others say violates the Ukrainian constitution and international law and took place in the strategic peninsula under duress of Russian military intervention. Putin maintained that the vote was legal and consistent with the right of self-determination, accord-

ing to the Kremlin. But the White House said Obama reminded Putin that the U.S. and its allies in Europe would impose sanctions against Russia should it annex Crimea. U.S. and EU sanctions are expected to be announced Monday. In the call, which came amid an exchange of decidedly Cold War-style rhetoric between East and West, Obama urged Putin to pursue a diplomatic de-escalation of the crisis, support the Ukraine government's plans for political reform, return its troops in Crimea to their bases, and halt advances into Ukrainian territory and military build-ups along Ukraine's borders. Obama told Putin that "a diplomatic resolution cannot be achieved while Russian military forces continue their incursions into Ukrainian territory and that the large-scale Russian military

exercises on Ukraine's borders only exacerbate the tension," the White House said in a statement. Even before official results of the referendum were announced, the White House denounced the vote, saying "no decisions should be made about the future of Ukraine without the Ukrainian government" and noting that Russia had rejected the deployment of international monitors in Crimea to ensure the rights of ethnic Russians there were protected. "Russia has spurned those calls as well as outreach from the Ukrainian government and instead has escalated its military intervention into Crimea and initiated threatening military exercises on Ukraine's eastern border," the White House said, calling those actions "dangerous and destabilizing." But with no military re-



President Barack Obama, right, talks with Ukraine Prime Minister Arseniy Yatsenyuk, left, in the Oval Office of the White House in Washington, Wednesday, March 12, 2014.

Associated Press

sponse envisioned, and with U.S. and EU sanctions apparently foregone conclusions, the Obama administration slightly shifted its focus to keeping Russia from encroachment into Ukraine beyond Crimea, where it has a large naval base.

U.S. officials warned that any Russia moves on east and south Ukraine would be a grave escalation requiring additional responses.

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Crimea vote

Continued from Page 3

In a call with Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov, Secretary of State John Kerry expressed "strong concerns" about Russian military activities in the southern Ukrainian region of Kherson, where Russian troops appeared Saturday, and about "continuing provocations" in cities in eastern Ukraine, the State Department said. Kerry "made clear that this crisis can only be resolved politically and that as Ukrainians take the necessary political measures going forward, Russia must reciprocate by pulling forces back to base and addressing the tensions and concerns about military engagement," it said. He also urged Russia "to support efforts by Ukrainians across the spectrum to address power sharing and decentralization through a constitutional reform

process that is broadly inclusive and protects the rights of minorities," including ethnic Russians, Russian speakers and others in the former Soviet republic whom Russia says it is concerned about, the department said.

The call was the second between Kerry and Lavrov since they had six hours of unsuccessful face-to-face talks on London on Friday. A senior State Department official said Lavrov's willingness to discuss Ukraine political reforms was positive. But the official stressed that the Russian military escalation was of "greatest concern" and must be reversed. The official spoke on condition of anonymity to discuss the private conversation.

Meanwhile, members of Congress said Sunday they were ready to enact tough sanctions on various Russian leaders, although \$1 billion in loan guarantees to help the Ukrainian economy is on hold while Congress is on a break. □



Masked unidentified soldiers and local residents are seen inside a shop in Perevalne, Ukraine, Sunday, March 16, 2014. In a referendum watched closely around the world, residents in Ukraine's strategic Crimean Peninsula voted Sunday on whether to demand greater autonomy or split off and seek to join Russia. The vote has been condemned as illegal by the United States and European countries.

Associated Press



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New York City's Empire State Building; the Leaning Tower of Pisa; Sydney Opera House in Australia; and both the Giza pyramids and the Sphinx in Egypt.

In Ireland, St. Patrick's Day provides the launch of the country's annual push for tourism, a big part of the rural economy.

"To Irish people by birth or descent, wherever they may be in the world, and to those who simply consider themselves to be friends of Ireland, I wish each and every one of you a happy, peaceful and authentically Irish St. Patrick's Day," Irish President Michael D. Higgins, the ceremonial head of state and guest of honor at Monday's parade in Dublin, said in a statement.

Ireland's head of government, Enda Kenny, became the first Irish prime minister to attend Boston's annual St. Patrick's Day breakfast Sunday.

But Kenny has resisted pressure, in both Ireland and America, to support the gay rights lobby's demand to have equal rights to parade on St. Patrick's Day, and he planned to march Monday in New York.

"The St. Patrick's Day parade (in New York) is a parade about our Irishness and not about sexuality, and I would be happy to participate in it," he said in Dublin before leaving for a six-day trip to the U.S.



A group standing for diversity marches in the annual St. Patrick's Day parade in the South Boston neighborhood of Boston, Sunday, March 16, 2014.

Associated Press

Parade organizers have said gay groups are not prohibited from marching, but are not allowed to carry gay-friendly signs or identify themselves as LGBT. Some LGBT groups were to protest the parade along Manhattan's Fifth Avenue on Monday. Others had planned to dump Guinness beer from the shelves of the Stonewall Inn, the birthplace of the gay rights movement, in protest of the brewer's plan to sponsor the parade, but that demonstration was canceled late Sunday after Guinness said in a statement that it had dropped its sponsorship.

Other beer companies joined the boycotts earlier, with Sam Adams withdrawing its sponsorship of Boston's parade and Heineken following suit in New York.

New York's parade, a tradition that predates the city itself, draws more than 1 million spectators and about 200,000 participants every March 17. It has long

been a mandatory stop on the city's political trail, and will include marching bands, traditional Irish dancers and thousands of uniformed city workers. □

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Newtown struggles to meet mental health demand

PAT EATON-ROBB
Associated Press

HARTFORD, Connecticut (AP) — Some of the charities paying for mental health care for children and families affected by the Sandy Hook massacre are running short of money and officials don't know how much they'll need — and for how long — to repair the psychological scars from the mass shooting.

Newtown officials are applying for a federal grant and charities are pooling their resources in an attempt to ensure that free long-term mental health care remains available following the December 2012 shooting that left 20 first graders and six educators dead.

"We hear in the media, 'Well Sandy Hook was 14 months ago, isn't everything fine?'" said Candice Bohr, executive director of the Newtown Youth and Family Services. "Well, no it's not and we get calls every day from the school wanting to address an issue. I would love to say that in 10 years we're going to see a huge drop and everyone's better and we've moved on, but that's not the case."

Three of the charities that have been providing funds for services have started working together, while the charity that has raised the most money — the Newtown-Sandy Hook Community Foundation



In this Dec. 14, 2013 file photo, Balloons fly outside a doctor's office on the first anniversary of the Sandy Hook massacre, in Newtown, Conn., Saturday, Dec. 14, 2013. **Associated Press**

— says that it will likely join the alliance soon.

The Newtown Lions Club, which raised \$350,000 for mental-health services in the wake of the shooting, has told the 250 people it served that it could no longer directly pay their mental health bills because fundraising was being outpaced by demand.

"The demand was well beyond anything we could have predicted," said Peter McNulty, president of the Lions Club.

Other charities are picking up the slack. The town's Rotary Club and the New-

town Memorial Fund, which had been spending a combined \$30,000 a month on mental health care for 150 families, partnered with the Lions Club, said Brian Mauriello, founder of the Newtown Memorial Fund.

Those who need help are being steered to the state's Office of Victim Services, which processes applications for money from a pool created by all three charities.

So far, nobody has been turned down.

"I don't think anybody has a crystal ball to say wheth-

er there's going to be enough money or not," said Linda Cimino, the director of the state Office of Victim's Services "I do know that the plan is for a 15-year horizon."

The Newtown-Sandy Hook Community Foundation has about \$4 million left after giving more than \$7 million to the 40 families most affected by the shooting.

Meanwhile, the town is seeking more than \$7 million in a federal grant, in part to help cover the next 18 months of costs for the nonprofit agencies pro-

viding free mental health care. The grant also would create a "recovery and resiliency" board, which would help match people with specific services and programs.

Bohr said her organization saw an 85 percent jump in clients after the Sandy Hook shooting, and had to quadruple its staff, adding 29 positions.

They have been providing everything from intense one-on-one therapy, to simple advice to parents who come in asking how to deal with their children's questions about the shooting.

Another nonprofit, the Resiliency Center of Newtown, opened in September. It has served about 500 people with free programs such as art and music therapy, grief counseling, and parenting classes. Stephanie Cinque, the executive director, said they have been funded with private donations, but she is counting on the federal grant money to keep the program going. While they await a response to the grant request, Cinque said it's clear the services are having an impact.

"After all the therapy she'd been through since 12/14 we never thought we'd have her back," the mother of a Sandy Hook student who completed a self-esteem program wrote in an email shared by Cinque. "And we have our daughter back." □

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Defense: General's deal drops sex assault charge

MICHAEL BIESECKER

Associated Press

RALEIGH, North Carolina

(AP) — Defense attorneys said Sunday that an Army general has agreed to a plea deal that includes the dropping of sexual assault charges against him.

Lawyers representing Brig. Gen. Jeffrey Sinclair said he will plead to lesser charges in exchange for having the sexual assault charges dropped, along with two other counts that might have required Sinclair to register as a sex offender. Sinclair, 51, had been accused of twice forcing a female captain under his command to perform oral sex on him during a three-year extramarital affair. But the Army's case against Sinclair crumbled in recent weeks as questions arose about whether the woman had lied in a pre-trial hearing.

The defense provided a copy of the plea agreement approved and signed by a high-ranking general overseeing the case. Sinclair is expected to appear Monday morning in court at Fort Bragg. The married 27-year Army veteran pleaded guilty earlier this month to having improper relationships with three subordinate officers, including the female captain who accused him of assault. He also pleaded guilty to adultery, which is a crime in the military. Under the plea deal reached this weekend, Sinclair will also admit abusing a government credit card he used while traveling to visit his mistress.

Defense attorney Richard Scheff said that Sinclair is admitting to his mistakes,

put pointed out that the general is pleading guilty to behavior that likely wouldn't be criminal in the civilian world.

"After wasting millions of taxpayer dollars, the Army finally admitted what it's known for many months: General Sinclair is innocent of sexual assault," Scheff said. "Brigadier General Sinclair has admitted to mistakes that are normally a matter between husbands and wives, or employees and HR departments. It's time to put this matter to rest."

A spokesman for Fort Bragg commander Maj. Gen. Clarence K.K. Chinn, who approved Sinclair's plea deal, could not immediately be reached for comment.

According to the defense, a separate agreement reached with Chinn will dictate what punishments Sinclair will receive. In theory, he faces more than 15 years in prison, though the plea agreement is unlikely to require anything close to the maximum penalties. Sinclair may also be forced to retire at reduced rank, costing him dearly in pension benefits.

That part of the agreement will remain secret until after the judge overseeing the case, Col. James Pohl, conducts a sentencing hearing later this week. That process will include testimony from about 20 witnesses. It was not immediately clear whether his primary accuser will be among those called to the stand. The Associated Press generally does not name those who say they were victims of sexual assault. □



In this March 4, 2014, file photo, Brig. Gen. Jeffrey Sinclair leaves the courthouse following a day of motions at Fort Bragg, N.C.

Associated Press

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Seoul: NKorea test-fires 18 short-range rockets

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) —

North Korea fired 18 short-range rockets into the sea off its east coast Sunday, South Korean officials said, in an apparent continuation of protests against ongoing U.S.-South Korean military drills. Such short-range rocket tests are usually considered routine, as opposed to North Korean long-range rocket or nuclear tests, which are internationally condemned as provocations. North Korea has conducted a string of similar short-range launches in recent weeks that have coincided with the annual military drills by allies Washington and Seoul. North Korea says the drills are preparation for an invasion. The allies say the exercises, which last year prompted North Korean threats of nuclear war against the South and the United States, are routine and defensive in nature.

Outside analysts say the North is taking a softer stance toward the U.S.-South Korean military drills this year because it wants better ties with the outside world to revive its strug-



South Korean Army's 130mm multiple rocket launcher fires a live round during an exercise against possible attacks from North Korea in Goseong, South Korea, Monday, March 3, 2014. Associated Press

gling economy. North Korea's weeks-long tirade of war rhetoric against Washington and Seoul last spring followed international condemnation of its third nuclear test, in February 2013.

South Korean Defense Ministry spokesman Kim Min-seok said the type of rockets North Korea launched Sunday wasn't yet clear. Earlier this month, Seoul said a North Korean artillery

launch happened minutes before a Chinese commercial plane reportedly carrying 202 people flew in the same area. Pyongyang has said that its recent rocket drills are part of reg-

ular training and are mindful of international navigation. The Korean Peninsula remains officially at war because the Korean War ended with an armistice, not a peace treaty. □



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Crimeans vote to leave Ukraine, join Russia

JOHN-THOR DAHLBURG
MIKE ECKEL

Associated Press

SIMFEROPOL, Ukraine
(AP) — Just two weeks after Russian troops seized their peninsula, Crimeans

voted Sunday to leave Ukraine and join Russia, overwhelmingly approving a referendum that sought to unite the strategically important Black Sea region with the country it was part of for more than two centuries.

The vote was widely condemned by Western leaders, who planned to move swiftly to punish Russia with economic sanctions.

As the votes were counted, a jubilant crowd gathered around a statue of Vladimir Lenin in the center of Simferopol to celebrate with song and dance. Many held Russian flags, and some unfurled a handwritten banner reading "We're Russian and proud of it." Fireworks exploded in the skies above.

"We want to go back home, and today we are going back home," said Viktoria Chernyshova, a 38-year-old businesswoman. "We needed to save ourselves from those unprincipled clowns who have taken power in Kiev." Ukraine's new government in Kiev called the referendum a "circus" directed at gunpoint by Moscow, referring to the thousands of troops that now occupy the peninsula, which has traded hands repeatedly since ancient times.

The referendum offered voters the choice of seeking annexation by Russia or remaining in Ukraine with greater autonomy. After 50 percent of the ballots were counted, more than 95 percent of voters had approved splitting off and joining Russia, according

to Mikhail Malishev, head of the referendum committee.

Final results were not expected until Monday. Opponents of secession appeared to have stayed away Sunday, denouncing the vote as a cynical power play and land grab by Russia.

Putin insisted the referendum was conducted in "full accordance with international law and the U.N. charter."

Russia was expected to face strong sanctions Monday from the U.S. and Europe for going forward with the vote, which could also encourage rising pro-Russian sentiment in Ukraine's east and lead to further divisions in this nation of 46 million. Residents in western Ukraine and the capital, Kiev, are strongly pro-West and Ukrainian nationalist.

Andrew Weiss, vice president for Russian and East European studies at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, suggested the confrontation could intensify.

Russia "is really turning its back on the outside world and is basically going to say to the West, 'Now, go ahead. Show us how tough you are.' And the West, I think, is struggling to come with an adequate response."

The Crimean parliament planned to meet Monday to formally ask Moscow to be annexed, and Crimean lawmakers were to fly to Moscow later in the day for talks, Crimea's pro-Russia prime minister said on Twitter.

Russian lawmaker Vladimir Zhirinovsky said the annexation could take "from three days to three months," according to the Interfax news agency.

Some residents in Crimea



Election commission workers open a ballot box at a polling station in downtown Simferopol, Ukraine, Sunday, March 16, 2014. Fireworks exploded and Russian flags fluttered above jubilant crowds Sunday after residents in Crimea voted overwhelmingly to secede from Ukraine and join Russia.

Associated Press

said they feared the new Ukrainian government that took over when President Viktor Yanukovich fled to Russia last month would oppress them.

"It's like they're crazy Texans in western Ukraine. Imagine if the Texans suddenly took over power (in Washington) and told everyone they should speak Texan," said Ilya Khlebanov, a voter in Simferopol. Ukraine's new prime minister insisted that neither Ukraine nor the West would recognize the vote.

"Under the stage direction of the Russian Federation, a circus performance is underway: the so-called referendum," Prime Minister Arseniy Yatsenyuk said Sunday. "Also taking part in the performance are 21,000 Russian troops, who with their guns are trying to prove the legality of the referendum."

As soon as the polls closed, the White House again denounced the vote.

"The international community will not recognize the results of a poll admin-

istered under threats of violence," it said in a statement. "Russia's actions are dangerous and destabilizing."

Russia raised the stakes Saturday when its forces, backed by helicopter gunships and armored vehicles, took control of the Ukrainian village of Strilkove and a key natural gas distribution plant nearby — the first Russian military move into Ukraine beyond the Crimean peninsula of 2 million people.

The Russian forces later returned the village but kept control of the gas plant. On Sunday, Ukrainian soldiers were digging trenches and erecting barricades between the village and the gas plant.

"We will not let them advance further into Ukrainian territory," said Serhiy Kuz, commander of a Ukrainian paratrooper battalion. Despite the threat of sanctions, Putin has vigorously resisted calls to pull back in Crimea. At the United Nations on Saturday, Russia vetoed a Security Council resolution declaring the referendum illegal. □

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Oscar Pistorius trial enters popular culture

CHRISTOPHER TORCHIA

Associated Press

PRETORIA, South Africa (AP) — Children chatter

about the Oscar Pistorius murder trial at South African schools, startling parents with details about how the athlete fatally shot his girlfriend. Big audiences in South Africa are watching a 24-hour television channel dedicated to coverage of the sensational trial. Turns of phrase from the courtroom — the defense lawyer's "I put it to you" challenge to prosecution witnesses — are creeping into popular culture.

The rise and fall of the double-amputee runner, who competed in the London Olympics in 2012 and then killed model Reeva Steenkamp less than a year after that inspirational triumph, is a consuming saga for South Africans that has drawn sheepish comparisons to reality television shows. The more people hear, the hungrier they are for more.

Was Oscar on his stumps or wearing prosthetic limbs when he battered the toilet door with a cricket bat? Does he scream like a woman, as the defense suggests, or did neighbors indeed hear a woman's screams on the night of the killing? Will apparent missteps by police investigators muddy the prosecution's case? Did Pistorius vomit during graphic testimony about Steenkamp's wounds because of anguish, or was he trying to curry sympathy with the impassive judge?

Some people turn up their noses at the spectacle, then dive into television or social media to soak up the latest, often extraordinary revelations. The parade of witnesses, some shown in the televised pro-



Oscar Pistorius sits in the dock during his murder trial at a court in Pretoria, South Africa, Friday, March 14, 2014.
Associated Press

ceedings and some concealed from TV viewers to respect their privacy, gives a glimpse into rich, diverse, flawed and accomplished lives, swept into a single narrative from previously anonymous routines.

Prof. Gert Saayman, the pathologist, described Steenkamp's wounds and the general impact of gunshots on flesh and bone in metaphor-studded monologues so precise and structured that they were almost lyrical, the macabre contents notwithstanding. Here was a man, clinical and courtly, who had conducted between 10,000 and 15,000 autopsies over the decades.

"Death is effectively a process rather than an event,

and may take some minutes for it to come to its conclusion at a physiological level," he said.

Saayman was followed by witness Darren Fresco, who dropped an expletive while recounting alleged gunplay involving Pistorius, his onetime friend, in the months before the runner shot his girlfriend. Fresco seemed miffed at the defense's suggestion that he was wearing tracksuit pants in the middle of summer, rather than shorts as he claims, during a 2012 incident in which a gun went off in a Johannesburg restaurant.

"If It's got Wheels or a Skirt it's Gonna Cost You Money," reads the caption on Fresco's Twitter feed. Fast-

living image aside, he aptly summarized the intense media coverage, saying it seemed to be everywhere: "It doesn't matter where you look, where you turn, where you go, what you listen to, what you watch." Later came the police investigators, cast by defense lawyer Barry Roux as bumbling reminiscent of the "Keystone Cops" characters from the old silent movies. Col. Johannes Vermeulen squatted awkwardly as he sought to show that Pistorius was not wearing prostheses when he hit the toilet door with a cricket bat, based on the policeman's analysis of marks in the wood.

"I'm not standing on my knees when I'm washing

the dishes," Vermeulen said to emphasize his point. "Maybe if you're scared of your wife, you can do that," Roux replied, briefly lightening the somber mood.

Pistorius said he hit the door with the bat after realizing he had shot Steenkamp by mistake, fearing she was an intruder. Prosecutors say he killed her after an argument.

South Africans are increasingly captivated by Roux's relentless cross-examination. A producer at the Highveld Stereo radio station recorded a parody rap song. Lyrics include: "I put it to you/that it is true/everything you say/I will misconstrue/I'm Barry Roux/And I put it to you/Ten times in a row/Just to confuse you."

The 2-week-old trial is expected to run into April. One commentator said it is even interfering with South African democracy ahead of elections on May 7.

"The trial will peak at the same time as the election campaign swings into high gear, which means political parties will have to take extraordinary measures to hold the voters' attention," Ranjeni Munusamy wrote in the Daily Maverick, an online news outlet.

The role of Jaco van Vuuren, the court sketch artist, seems quaint alongside all the high-tech scrutiny. Van Vuuren, who knew Pistorius before the killing, said it was emotionally difficult at first.

"I said to him before this court session that I'm not there to judge him. I'm just there to do my job," van Vuuren told South Africa's Eyewitness News. "He understands it. And the first day, he just hugged me and asked me for coffee." □

Nigeria Navy destroys 260 illegal oil refineries

HILARY UGURU
MICHELLE FAUL
Associated Press

WARRI, Nigeria (AP) —

The Nigerian Navy said it has destroyed 260 illegal oil refineries and burned 100,000 tons of contraband fuel, but critics say this targeting of small-time criminals fails to confront the biggest culprits in oil thefts — the politically-connected criminal cartels who sell on the international market.

Similar missions in the past have failed to slow thefts valued at more than \$20 million a day on the world market. Shell Nigeria, the biggest operator in the West African nation, said it lost \$1 billion to oil thefts in 2013. On Sunday, Shell confirmed that an under-sea pipeline leak has forced the closure of its Forcados export terminal, a major installation with capacity to handle 400,000 barrels of crude a day. Spokesman Precious Okolobo said the terminal was closed March 4 and the cause of the leak still is being investigated.

On Friday night, the commanding officer of the NNS Delta, Capt. Musa Gemu, said sailors destroyed about 260 refineries in the Warri area of the southern Niger Delta. He said they also arrested five suspects.

A former militant in the area, Cross Ebikpade, said such attacks have little effect as the primitive operations use materials like oil drums that are easily available locally. "You can burn the site today but by next week the operators are back in business," he said.

Niger Delta residents have told The Associated Press that they feel entitled to steal oil because

they have received little reparation for decades of oil spills and gas flaring that have corrupted their environment, killing fishing and agricultural fields.

Director Patrick Dele Cole of Stop The Theft, an advocacy group, estimates thefts at 250,000 barrels a day — more than a tenth of the country's daily production of 2.2 million barrels. He has told the AP that the thefts will not end until authorities address the fact that profits benefit the same generals and politicians who are ordering the raids on small illegal refineries.

Another non-government group, the Stakeholders Democracy Network, published a report in October alleging a small group of senior military officials charged with halting the thefts actually have shares in syndicates that are stealing crude. Lower-ranking officers demand large bribes to allow boats carrying stolen crude to leave the country, the network said.


Dele Cole said, "The whole idea of selling oil illegally was sponsored and maintained by our political leaders" to fund election campaigns.


With Nigeria gearing up for hotly contested elections in February 2015, it's unlikely there will be any political will to halt the thefts soon.


Corruption at the highest levels is endemic in Nigeria. The oil thefts are unrelated to some 20 billion petrodollars allegedly missing from the country's treasury, from oil sold between January 2012 and July 2013. President Goodluck Jonathan has announced an international forensic audit to unravel the accounts. □



In this Saturday, May 18, 2013 file photo, an abandoned illegal refinery is seen after it was raided by Nigeria Navy at the creeks of Bayelsa, Nigeria. Associated Press







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Syrian army ousts rebels from border stronghold

BARBARA SURK
DIAA HADID
Associated Press

BEIRUT (AP) — With rebels fleeing into neighboring Lebanon, Syrian government troops and Hezbollah fighters captured a strategic town near the frontier Sunday, ousting opposition fighters from their last stronghold in the vital border area.

Yabroud was a major smuggling hub for the rebels trying to overthrow President Bashar Assad. The town's fall is the latest in a string of strategic gains by Assad's forces that have consolidated authority in the past months in Syria's major cities, including the capital, Damascus.

Militants from Lebanon's Shiite group Hezbollah have been instrumental



This photo released by the Syrian official news agency SANA, shows damaged building in the town of Yabroud, Syria, Sunday, March. 16, 2014. **Associated Press**

coalition and the Syrian army said.

Yabroud was an important supply line for rebels into Lebanon. The town overlooks an important cross-country highway from Damascus to the central city of Homs.

"There's no doubt Yabroud had big strategic importance," said Capt. Islam Alloush, a spokesman of the Islamic Front, a rebel coalition who had fought in Yabroud but were now streaming into Lebanon. The biggest immediate loss, Alloush said, would be that rebels now had no way of supplying fighters outside of Damascus, where Syrian forces have surrounded a series of opposition-held areas, denying them food, power and clean water.

Syrian Defense Minister Gen. Fahd Jassem al-Freij hailed the army's latest triumph while inspecting troops in Yabroud on Sunday.

"We are moving from one victory to another," al-Freij said in comments carried by state news agency SANA. He said the army troops are now "chasing terrorists and gangs, and soon, all their hideouts will be destroyed." Syrian officials routinely refer to rebels as terrorists.

The fall of Yabroud immediately emboldened government forces to attack nearby rebel-held towns, pressing forward in what has been nearly a year-long advance against opposition fighters.

Government warplanes chased the fleeing rebels into Lebanon, state media said, firing two rockets in the outskirts of the border town of Arsal, a logistical base for the Syrian rebels. The surrounding fields and hills have serve as shelter for tens of thousands of refugees. Syrian helicopters dropped bombs on villages outside Yabroud, said the deputy mayor of Arsal, Ahmad Fliti, and the British-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights. The bombing killed at least six people, including two children, in the nearby village of Muarat, they said. □

to Assad's success on the battlefield, and support from the Iranian-backed fighters appears to have tipped the balance into the government's favor in Yabroud. However, the fact opposition fighters fled into Lebanon, where Hezbollah is a major force, suggests the conflict could bleed further into Syria's neighbor. The civil war already has ignited polarizing sectarian tensions between Lebanon's Sunnis and Shiites.

"It's a good day for Assad," said Fawaz A. Gerges, director of the Middle East Center at the London School of Economics. "He has not only survived the past three years, but his army is intact and on a rebound, with his allies Hezbollah firmly behind him." However, Gerges warned the fall of Yabroud will reverberate in neighboring Lebanon, "pouring gasoline on sectarian divisions and likely bring more violence" into the country.

Outgunned by Assad's army and Hezbollah, rebels abandoned their positions on the hills surrounding Yabroud overnight Sunday, collapsing the fighter ranks inside the town and allowing government forces to move in from the east shortly after dawn, a spokesman for the rebel

18

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come new members of the Alhambra Casino during the entire month of March. All you have to do is to present your Westin Palm Beach Casino membership Card and a valid ID and you can start to benefit of everything the Alhambra Casino has to offer. Do not miss this opportunity to become a member of Alhambra Casino and receive your welcome gift which is \$20 free slot play.



In addition, the Alhambra Casino invites all the Aruba community and visitors to our special Flag and Anthem day bingo this coming Tuesday, March 18 at 1pm. Ticket sale starts at 10am as soon as the casino opens. Purchase your bin-

go ticket for only \$4.75 for 8 games and the progressive bingo for only \$1.10. Be the winner of our bingo progressive for the amount of \$12,041 in 50 calls. If not, bingo progressive pays \$500 in 51 calls, \$300 in 52 calls and \$200 in 53 calls or

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from 5.30 p.m. till 10 p.m. Bugaloe Beach Bar & Grill is open daily from 9 a.m. till midnight. Start your day of right with a delicious cappuccino, or walk in to enjoy a casual lunch in between sunbathing. A few nights a week Bugaloe is host to some of the best live bands of Aruba, while you are savoring dinner and enjoying the beautiful Aruba Sunset! Don't forget to make one hour in the day even happier at Bugaloe's daily Happy Hour from 5 till 6 p.m. Reservations are not necessary, just follow your hips to the music and the fun and smiles saluting you! ☐

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a sandwich, or a mouth watering plate of food or a tantalizing dessert, we have it all. The unique ambience of each restaurant makes each visit a great dining experience. In connection with the Flag & Anthem Day the restaurants at Paseo will have different specials and discounts. Le Bistro restaurant is offering a special 4 course dinner for \$32.95 on their outdoor terrace where you can enjoy the local music. Paseo Herencia Shopping & Entertainment Center would like to invite everyone to come and celebrate Aruba's National Day with family and friends. ☐

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Senden rallies late to win at Innisbrook

DOUG FERGUSON

AP Golf Writer

PALM HARBOR, Florida (AP)

— More than seven years without a victory. A trip to Augusta National riding on the outcome. A three-way tie for the lead going into a daunting three-hole closing stretch called “The Snake Pit” on the Copperhead course of Innisbrook. John Senden was trying to keep his mind off all of that Sunday in the Valspar Championship.

The finish will be hard for him to forget.

Senden chipped in for birdie from 70 feet on the 16th hole, one of only two birdies in the final round at the toughest hole on the course. He followed that with a 20-foot birdie putt to build a two-shot lead, then made it tough for Kevin Na to catch him with perfect pace on a 40-foot putt on the 18th that left him only a tap-in for par.

“It feels good to do it again after seven years,” said Senden, who closed with



John Senden, of Australia, tees off on the second hole during the final round of the Valspar Championship golf tournament at Innisbrook, Sunday, March 16, 2014, in Palm Harbor, Fla.

Associated Press

a 1-under 70. “Lot of good things to come.”

One of them is next month — the Masters.

The 42-year-old Australian was No. 123 in the world and his only hope of returning to Augusta National for a third straight year was to win. That didn't look likely after opening with rounds of 71-72, leaving him in the middle of the pack. But he had a bogey-free 64 on Saturday to get back into contention and then finished it off in a windy final round with Innisbrook as tough as it had been all week.

“If I could just stay in the moment, I knew I was swinging well enough to give it a shake,” Senden said.

Senden finished at 7-under 277, the third straight tournament on the U.S. PGA Tour Florida swing won with a single-digit score under par.

Continued on Page 22



Driver Carl Edwards takes a victory lap with the checkered flag after winning the NASCAR Sprint series auto race at Bristol Motor Speedway on Sunday, March 16, 2014, in Bristol, Tenn.

Associated Press

JENNA FRYER

AP Auto Racing Writer

BRISTOL, Tennessee (AP)

— Carl Edwards claimed a rain-soaked NASCAR win Sunday at Bristol Motor Speedway, where weather wreaked havoc on yet another Sprint Cup race

this season.

The rain caused two delays lasting more than five hours — one that delayed the start Sunday by almost two hours, and another that stopped the race for 3 hours, 18 minutes.

Much like the season-

Edwards leads Ford sweep at rain-soaked Bristol

opening Daytona 500, which was stopped by rain for almost six hours, the threat of more bad weather bringing a sudden halt to the race forced the drivers to go hard every single lap. So when a caution with 77 laps remaining sent most of the field to pit road, Edwards' crew chief, Jimmy Fennig, made the call to leave his driver on the track. The move gave Edwards the lead on the restart with 70 laps remaining. He had no trouble pulling out to an easy lead and had victory in sight when the yellow caution lights

came on with two laps remaining.

No one was sure what the caution was for at the time. NASCAR said after the race that a lights malfunction triggered the final caution and officials made it a full caution “because operation of the lights was comprised.” After the caution lights came on, the rain started again and NASCAR had no choice but to declare the race over.

Edwards led Roush Fenway Racing teammate Ricky Stenhouse Jr. across the finish line. Aric Almirola from Richard Petty Motors-

ports was third, giving Ford drivers a sweep of the top three spots.

Tony Stewart salvaged a horrific start to the weekend — he qualified 37th — by finishing a season-best fourth.

Marcos Ambrose was fifth as both of RPM's drivers finished inside the top five.

Pole-sitter Denny Hamlin was sixth in the highest-finishing Toyota and was followed by Hendrick Motorsports teammates Jeff Gordon and Kasey Kahne. Brian Vickers was ninth and rookie Kyle Larson rounded out the top 10. □



Djokovic beats Federer to win Indian Wells title

BETH HARRIS

AP Sports Writer

INDIAN WELLS, California

(AP) — Novak Djokovic beat Roger Federer 3-6, 6-3, 7-6 (3) to win the BNP Paribas Open for the third time on Sunday.

Federer rallied from a break down and a 5-3 deficit in the third set to force the tiebreaker, but he made a slew of mistakes to lose the 33rd meeting between the longtime rivals.

Federer still leads the series 17-16, having beaten Djokovic in three sets in the semifinals at Dubai two weeks ago. Djokovic will remain No. 2 in the world, while Federer will rise three spots to No. 5 on Monday in the ATP Tour rankings.

Flavia Pennetta routed injured Agnieszka Radwanska 6-2, 6-1 to win the women's title, the biggest of her career.

Federer was trying to win a record fifth title in the Southern California desert, and at 32, he would have been the oldest Masters 1000 winner since 34-year-old Andre Agassi won at Cincinnati in 2004.

But Djokovic wouldn't allow it.

After Federer breezed to the first set in 31 minutes, Djokovic settled down and locked into the punishing rallies that marked most of the match. He earned the lone break of the second set to go up 5-3 after Federer pulled a forehand wide.

Djokovic got the early break in the third, again on one of Federer's forehand errors, to lead 2-1. His 112-mph (180 kph) ace gave him a 4-2 lead, and he extended it to 5-3 with a backhand winner down the line.

But Federer then served a

love-game to make it 5-4 and broke Djokovic on a forehand error to tie the set, 5-all.

In the tiebreaker, the Serb raced to a 5-1 lead, helped by four errors from Federer. Another of Federer's forehand errors gave Djokovic a 6-2 lead before the Swiss star's ace ensured Djokovic would have to win the match on his serve. He did, when Federer's backhand landed in the net.

Djokovic's victory evened their rivalry on hard courts at 13 wins apiece.

A year ago, Pennetta was close to retiring from tennis. The Italian veteran's ranking plunged to 166th in the world in June, and she had struggled to rebuild her career after having right wrist surgery the previous August.

Now she's glad she stuck around.

"After so many years, so much work and everything, this is the moment I always waited for," she said. "And it's coming when you don't expect. It was something I was waiting since long time, and finally I have a good trophy in my hands."

Actually, the crystal trophy was so heavy, she didn't hoist it for photographers. The 32-year-old Italian became the third-oldest winner of the tournament after Martina Navratilova, who won at age 33 and again at 34 in 1990-91. It was Pennetta's first title since winning at Marbella in 2010.

"We are old, but we still good athletes," Pennetta said. "We are strong. We have so many years on the tour, and we know how to handle the emotion and everything."

As the 20th seed, Pennetta became the lowest seed to win the title. She came in

ranked 21st and is projected to rise to No. 12 in the world Monday in the WTA Tour rankings. □

Novak Djokovic, of Serbia, kisses the trophy after he beat Roger Federer, of Switzerland, 3-6, 6-3, 7-6 to win the final match of the BNP Paribas Open tennis tournament, Sunday, March 16, 2014, in Indian Wells, Calif.

Associated Press



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Capitals double up Maple Leafs 4-2

WASHINGTON (AP) — Troy Brouwer scored two goals and the Washington Capitals scored three times in the first period before holding on against the Toronto Maple Leafs.

Joel Ward had a goal and an assist, and Jason Chimera also tallied for Washington, which scored on three of its first five shots against James Reimer for a 3-0 lead.

The Maple Leafs pulled within 3-2 in the second period and it stayed that way until Brouwer's empty-netter with four seconds left.

Dion Phaneuf had a goal and an assist for Toronto and Troy Bodie also scored. The Capitals won their sec-



Washington Capitals right wing Alex Ovechkin, left, gets tripped up by Toronto Maple Leafs defenseman Paul Ranger during the third period of an NHL hockey game on Sunday, March 16, 2014, in Washington. The Capitals won 4-2.

Associated Press

ond straight. They begin a three-game West Coast swing Tuesday in Anaheim, Calif.

PHILADELPHIA 4, PITTSBURGH 3

PITTSBURGH (AP) — Wayne Simmonds had two power-play goals in the first period and the Philadelphia Flyers beat the Pittsburgh Penguins for the second consecutive day, 4-3 on Sunday.

Simmonds assisted on Brayden Schenn's goal 2:06 into the game and then scored twice in a 6:54 span to give the Flyers a three-goal lead 14 minutes in. Surging Philadelphia, which beat its cross-state rival 4-0 at home Saturday, improved to 5-1-1 in its past seven.

Defensemen Brooks Orpik and Matt Niskanen and recent call-up Jayson Megna scored for the injury-depleted Penguins, who lost two straight in regulation for the first time since dropping three in a row from Nov. 6-13.

During the final seconds, the Penguins' Sidney Crosby hit the post with a backhand off a pass from Evgeni Malkin while skating down the right wing.

SHARKS 1, RANGERS 0

NEW YORK (AP) — Antti Niemi stopped 41 shots for his fourth shutout of the season and made Logan Couture's first-period, short-handed goal stand up as the San Jose Sharks beat the New York Rangers for their sixth straight win.

Niemi and the Sharks defense were the difference in this one, unlike in the first meeting between the teams, won 9-2 by San Jose on Oct. 8. Niemi, who has 27 NHL shutouts, was particularly strong during a Rangers power play early in the third.

San Jose, tied with Ana-

heim atop the Pacific Division, is 11-2-1 in its past 14. In a 12-game stretch against Eastern Conference opponents that ends Tuesday at home versus Florida, the Sharks are 9-1-1.

CANUCKS 4, PANTHERS 3, SO

SUNRISE, Florida (AP) — Nicklas Jensen scored in the first period and added the only goal in the shootout and the Vancouver Canucks earned a victory over former goalie Roberto Luongo and the Florida Panthers.

Alex Burrows had a goal and two assists and Dan Hamhuis also scored for the Canucks. Eddie Lack made 26 saves.

Jimmy Hayes scored two power-play goals for the Panthers. Vincent Trocheck also scored and Luongo stopped 29 shots.

Luongo faced his former team just 12 days being traded from the Canucks to the Panthers on March 4. Luongo is 2-3 since joining the Panthers. Lack stopped all three shots in the shootout and won against Luongo, his former teammate.

OILERS 2, HURRICANES 1

RALEIGH, North Carolina (AP) — Justin Schultz scored a power-play goal at 9:01 of the third period and the Edmonton Oilers earned a win over the Carolina Hurricanes.

David Perron and Taylor Hall had the assists for Schultz's ninth goal of the season.

Matt Hendricks opened the scoring at 6:43 of the first to give the Oilers a 1-0 lead. Boyd Gordon and Schultz had the assists on Hendricks' fifth goal of the season.

Edmonton's Ben Scrivens made 29 saves for the win, while Anton Khudobin made 31 saves for the Hurricanes. □

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Houston Rockets' James Harden (13) goes over Miami Heat's Chris Andersen (11) for two points during the second half of an NBA basketball game in Miami, Sunday, March 16, 2014. The Heat won 113-104. Associated Press

The Associated Press

MIAMI (AP) — MIAMI (AP) — Ray Allen scored 14 of his 25 points in the fourth quarter on a milestone day for the veteran, LeBron James and Dwyane Wade each scored 24 and the Miami Heat beat the Houston Rockets 113-104 on Sunday to snap their worst skid in three years. Chris Bosh added 18 points for the Heat, who won for just the second time in their last seven games. They were down 97-92 following a 3-pointer by James Harden midway through the fourth, then finished the game on a 21-7 run. Allen had 11 points dur-

ing that late stretch, including a 3-pointer that allowed him to pass Allen Iverson for 21st on the NBA's scoring list. It was also the 750th regular-season win that Allen was a part of in his career. Harden finished with 30



NBA Capsules

Allen gets hot late, Heat top Rockets 113-104

points for Houston, which got 21 points and 14 rebounds from Dwight Howard. Patrick Beverley added 15 points and Terrence Jones scored 12 for the Rockets, who've dropped three straight. SUNS 121, RAPTORS 113 TORONTO (AP) — Markieff Morris had 16 points and 14 rebounds, Gerald Green scored 13 of his 28 points in the fourth quarter, and Phoenix beat Toronto for its second straight victory. Goran Dragic scored 19 points, Eric Bledsoe had 14 and P.J. Tucker 11 for the Suns, who had lost three of four before win-

ning 87-80 at Boston on Friday. Bench scoring was a big edge for Phoenix, whose reserves outscored Toronto's 59-11. Kyle Lowry had 28 points and 13 assists, and Terrence Ross scored 22 points as Toronto lost at home for the first time since a triple-overtime defeat to Washington on Feb. 27, snapping a four-game winning streak at Air Canada Centre. BOBCATS 101, BUCKS 92 MILWAUKEE (AP) — Kemba Walker scored 21 points and Al Jefferson added 16 of his 20 in the second half to help

Charlotte beat Milwaukee for its fourth straight victory. Gary Neal added 18 in his return to Milwaukee after the Bucks traded him to Charlotte last month. Gerald Henderson scored 14 as the Bobcats matched their longest winning streak of the season, set Feb. 18-22. Brandon Knight scored 21 points and Ramon Sessions added 18. Jeff Adrien and John Henson each had 12, but it wasn't enough to stop the Bobcats from their first sweep of a season series from the Bucks. □

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Contador wins Tirreno 5th leg, takes overall lead

GUARDIAGRELE, Italy (AP)

— Alberto Contador again showed his strength in the mountains as he claimed a second successive Tirreno-Adriatico stage win to move into the overall lead on Sunday. Contador, who won the grueling fourth stage of the race on Saturday, recorded a dominant victory over another tough leg from Amatrice to Guardiagrele, finishing in 4 hours, 54 minutes and 42 seconds.

The Spaniard made his move on the penultimate climb and then used a final burst of pace to hold off Simon Geschke for the win, beating the German by six seconds. Geschke and American Benjamin King, who finished third, had been in the lead group for



Spain's Alberto Contador celebrates as he wins the fourth stage of the Tirreno Adriatico cycling race, in Selvarotonda, Italy, Saturday, March 15, 2014.

Associated Press

most of the day.

"Without a doubt this win will remain one of the best of my career and one that I'll always remember," Contador said. "It flashed by in a second but it'll be a special memory."

"I knew it was risky to try and attack so far out, but I really wanted this victory and I like to do things like that." The 192-kilometer (119-mile) leg ended in an ascent up the Muro di Guardiagrele, which has an average gradient of 22.2 percent, with some points at 30 percent.

"It's an incredible climb, I've never seen anything like that," Contador add-

ed.

Contador took over the lead from Michal Kwiatkowski, who dropped out of the top 10. Contador is 2 minutes, 8 seconds ahead of Movistar's Nairo Quintana and 2:15 ahead of Tinkoff-Saxo teammate Roman Kreuziger.

Monday's penultimate stage is a 189km (117.4 mile) leg from Bucchianico to Porto Sant'Elpidio.

The race ends on Tuesday with an individual time trial in San Benedetto del Tronto.

Many riders are using the race as a warmup for the Milan-San Remo classic on March 23. □

Valspar

Continued from Page 18

Na recovered from an atrocious finish to his front nine — including a double bogey when he missed a 3-foot putt — to make it close.

He nearly drove into the water on the 16th and escaped with par. He then holed a 15-foot birdie putt on the 17th to get within one shot, but his pitching wedge out of the first cut of rough on the 18th hole sailed long, and a 40-foot birdie putt to force a play-off never came close.

Na closed with a 72 and finished one shot behind.

"I knew coming into today that I felt like if I shot par I had a chance to win," Na said. "If I break par, I felt like it was going to be a lock."

He did neither, though his runner-up finish was his best PGA Tour result since he won in Las Vegas toward the end of the 2011 season.

Scott Langley, hitting superb shots to account for the wind, didn't hit a green over the final four holes and still managed to save par on three of them. The one bogey on the 16th hole, when he went long of the green from the middle of the fairway, proved costly.

Langley was the only player who shot par or better all four days. He closed with a

70 to finish alone in third.

Robert Garrigus started the final round with a one-shot lead, which didn't last long. His tee shot on the third hole bounced off a lawn chair and against a tree, leading to a double bogey. He made another double bogey on No. 6 and went out in 41.

The American, now 0-4 with at least a share of the 54-hole lead, had a 75 to tie for fourth at 4 under with Will MacKenzie (69) and Luke Donald (70).

Justin Rose had five bogeys over seven holes in the middle of his round and shot 74, a disappointing day for the world's No. 7-ranked player who had started the final round just three shots out of the lead. Senden last won a tournament at the end of 2006 at the Australian Open. Earlier that year, he picked up his first PGA Tour win at the John Deere Classic. He didn't imagine going more than seven years until his next win.

"It's something that makes you believe more than you can get it done again, rather than just once and thinking back then in '06, 'Was it a flash in the pan?' I don't believe so," Senden said. "But now it makes me feel (validated) from the John Deere." □

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Officers' body cameras raise privacy concerns



This Jan. 15, 2014 file photo shows a Los Angeles Police officer wearing an on-body cameras during a demonstration for media in Los Angeles. Associated Press

TAMI ABDOLLAH
Associated Press

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Officers at thousands of American law enforcement agencies are wearing tiny cameras to record their interactions with the public, but in many cases the devices are being rolled out faster than departments are able to create policies to govern their use.

And some rank-and-file officers are worried the technology might ultimately be used to derail their careers if, for example, an errant comment about a superior is captured on tape.

Most law enforcement leaders and civil liberties advocates believe the cameras will ultimately help officers because the devices give them a way to record events from their point of view at a time when citizens armed with cellphones are actively scrutinizing their every move.

They say, however, that the lack of clear guidelines on the cameras' use could potentially undermine departments' goals of creating greater accountability of officers and jeopardize the privacy of both the public and law enforcement officers. "This is a brave new world that we're entering here, where citizens and police both are going to be filming each other," said Chuck Wexler, the executive director of the Police Executive Research Forum, a nonprofit police research and policy organization.

The U.S. Justice Department has asked Wexler's group to help develop guidelines for the cameras' use, from

when the devices should be turned on to how departments can protect the privacy of those who are inadvertently captured on the footage.

Equipping police with cameras isn't a new concept. For decades police have used cameras mounted to the dashboards of their patrol cars — initially referred to with suspicion by officers as "indict-o-cams" until they discovered the footage exonerated them in most cases.

As camera technology and data storage has become more affordable and reliable, the use of portable cameras has increased over the last five years. Now officers in one of every six departments are patrolling with them on their chests, lapels or sunglasses, according to Scott Greenwood, general counsel for the national American Civil Liberties Union and an expert on the cameras.

With the push of a finger, officers can show the dangers and difficulties of their work. Unlike dashboard cameras, body cameras follow the officer everywhere — when their cruiser stays parked at the curb, when they go into homes on search warrants or when they are running after a suspect.

The cameras, if they aren't turned off, can go with officers into a bathroom or locker room, or capture private conversations between partners. Footage can become evidence in a criminal case, or be used to discipline officers or exonerate them of false accusations.

Without strong policies, experts say, departments could lose the public's trust. The public needs to know cameras aren't only being turned on when it'll help officers. But there are certain moments such as during the interview of a sexual assault victim or talk with a confidential informant when filming may be sensitive or even compromise a case, said Bay Area attorney Mike Rains, whose firm

often represents officers and has worked on body camera policies with departments.

The Los Angeles Police Department is now field testing cameras with an eye toward ultimately deploying them to all patrol officers — a move that would make its program the nation's largest. For the six months of the test, underway now, there will be no official policy. Department officials say a

policy will be created with input from the community and union, when they know more about how the cameras work in the field.


Union chief Tyler Izen, who represents more than 9,900 sworn officers, said that while there've been no complaints so far, the strategy is risky and could be problematic for his officers as well as the public, which has become an involuntary guinea pig in the trial. □



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China widens currency's fluctuation against dollar

JOE McDONALD
AP Business Writer

BEIJING (AP) — China announced on Saturday a modest easing of exchange rate controls that have been criticized by Washington and other trading partners, adding to a flurry of reform initiatives aimed at making its slowing economy more efficient.

The range in which the tightly controlled yuan is allowed to fluctuate against the dollar each day will double in size, though to a still relatively narrow 2 percent.

The move was widely expected after Premier Li Keqiang promised in an annual policy speech last week to give market forces a "decisive role" in allocating credit and other resources in the state-dominated economy.

The ruling Communist Party says it wants to inject more competition into the economy and nurture self-sustaining growth based on domestic consumption instead of trade and investment.

In a steady drumbeat of recent changes, authorities also have announced plans to create China's first privately financed banks and promised to ease the tax and regulatory burden on entrepreneurs.



An elderly Chinese man walks past the headquarters of the People's Bank of China (PBOC) in Beijing, China, Tuesday, March 11, 2014. China's central bank governor Zhou Xiaochuan said Beijing might finish the process of easing controls on interest rates within two years and market forces will set the pace for allowing use of its tightly controlled currency abroad.

Widening the trading band will help to "optimize the efficiency of capital allocation and market allocation of resources to accelerate economic development," the central bank said in a statement.

The U.S. Treasury Department had no immediate reaction to the announcement.

China's rapid economic growth tumbled to a two-decade low of 7.7 percent last year. This year's official growth target is slightly lower at 7.5 percent, but

Li said this week Beijing will be flexible about it as long as the economy generates enough new jobs.

Washington and other governments complain Beijing suppresses the value of the yuan, unfairly making Chinese exports cheaper abroad and hurting foreign competitors.

The relatively small size of Saturday's change appeared unlikely to mollify Beijing's foreign critics. Some U.S. lawmakers have demanded punitive tariffs on Chinese goods if Beijing

failed to ease controls, but the White House has resisted imposing sanctions.

Beijing reported a \$260 billion global trade surplus last year, a \$30 billion increase over 2012 and among the largest ever recorded by any country.

Chinese leaders say they plan eventually to let the yuan float freely, but private sector analysts say that might be decades away.

Beijing is reluctant to allow big changes in the currency for fear of hurting ex-

porters that employ millions of workers.

But analysts say they might have gained confidence from recent strong trade performance.

Allowing the yuan to rise in value would increase the buying power of Chinese households,

helping to achieve the ruling party's goal of nurturing more sustainable economic growth based on domestic consumption instead of trade and investment.

A stronger yuan also could help to suppress pressure for politically sensitive consumer prices to rise by making imports cheaper.

Reform advocates say that by suppressing the yuan's value,

Beijing has been forcing even poor households to subsidize exporters.

In recent weeks, the central bank has been guiding the yuan's exchange lower against the dollar in what analysts said was an effort to discourage speculators who are moving money into China to profit from the currency's rise.

Beijing allowed the yuan to gain about 20 percent against the dollar beginning in 2005 but movement stopped after the 2008 global crisis as the government tried to protect struggling exporters. □

Associated Press

Chinese e-commerce giant Alibaba gears for U.S. IPO

KELVIN CHAN
AP Business Writer

HONG KONG (AP) — Chinese e-commerce giant Alibaba Group said Sunday that it will go public on a U.S. stock exchange in a move analysts say might raise up to \$15 billion in the year's biggest initial public offering. The announcement confirming plans for a U.S. offering ended months of speculation over where the company would list its shares after talks for a Hong Kong stock sale fell apart last year. Alibaba is one of the world's biggest Internet companies and says more than \$150 bil-

lion worth of merchandise changes hands on its online platforms each year, more than Amazon and eBay combined.

The company began as a service to link Chinese suppliers with retailers abroad and has branched out into retail e-commerce. It is little known abroad but has launched two consumer-oriented services in the United States.

"Alibaba Group has decided to commence the process of an initial public offering in the United States," the company said in a statement. "This will make us a more global com-

pany and enhance the company's transparency, as well as allow the company to continue to pursue our long-term vision and ideals." It gave no details of the timing or size of the initial public offering or on which exchange it would take place.

Analysts have estimated that an Alibaba IPO could raise up to \$15 billion and value the company at more than \$100 billion.

Hangzhou, China-based Alibaba had previously abandoned plans for an IPO in Hong Kong because the semiautonomous Chinese financial center's



Young men walk past the corporate logo at the headquarters compound of Alibaba Group in Hangzhou in eastern China's Zhejiang province in this May 21, 2012 file photo.

Associated Press

stock exchange refused to change its rules to accommodate the company's unusual management structure. The company failed to persuade the Hong Kong exchange to

grant it an exception from listing rules so that it could maintain a "partnership" structure that lets top executives, who own 10 percent of the company, retain control of the board. □

Wind power line proposal irks some Midwest farmers

By **JIM SALTER**
Associated Press

Wind power line proposal irks some Midwest farmers

ST. LOUIS (AP) -- The windy plains of Kansas could be a treasure trove in the nation's effort to harness clean energy, but a major proposal to move wind-generated electricity eastward is running into a roadblock: Farmers who don't want high-power transmission lines on their land.

Clean Line Energy Partners wants to spend \$2.2 billion to build a 750-mile-long high-voltage overhead transmission line. Towers 110 to 150 feet tall, 4-6 per mile, would carry lines with power generated by Kansas' modernistic windmill turbines through sparsely populated northern Missouri, through the cornfields of Illinois and to a substation in Sullivan, Ind. The exact route has not been finalized.

The idea is supported by environmental groups who say it is an opportunity to take a big step forward for an energy source that could reduce the nation's reliance on fossil fuels and cut air pollution. Clean Line has four other transmission line projects in the works in the West and Midwest.

All five still require regulatory approval. If all goes right, the Kansas-to-Indiana line - called the Green Belt Express Clean Line - could be operational by 2018, said Mark Lawlor, director of development for Clean Line.

"There are a whole host of wind developers who are ready to go but they don't have the ability to transmit the power," Lawlor said.



In this Aug. 23, 2013 file photo wind turbines are silhouetted by the setting sun as they produce electricity near Beaumont, Kan.

"But like an oil or gas field that's remotely located, you've got to find a way to get that resource to market."

Clean Line says the project will be an economic boon, with all four states seeing new jobs for construction and local companies providing things like parts and concrete. Lawlor said consumers would benefit, too, by the new source of power that would drive down electricity costs.

Kansas figures to benefit the most. Clean Line projects that more than \$7 billion of new wind projects will be needed to meet demand created by the line, potentially creating thousands of new jobs in Kansas and making the state a hub of wind energy.

Randi Tveitaraas Jack, energy coordinator for the

Kansas Department of Commerce, said the agency doesn't endorse individual projects, but that in general, "We're very supportive of the wind industry in Kansas and continued growth, and transmission is an important piece of that."

Both the property owner and the counties where the towers would be built stand to make money. A typical county could see \$800,000 annually in property taxes, Lawlor said.

As for property owners, compensation will depend on how much easement is needed, the value of the land and other factors. Lawlor gave an example of an easement stretching half a mile across land valued at \$5,000 an acre, housing two tower structures. The owner would

get about \$45,500 for the easement and a one-time payment of \$18,000 for each structure - a total of \$81,500. Owners could also opt for smaller annual payments for the structures.

Yet many landowners have organized in opposition to Clean Line.

They worry about whether the towers and lines will reduce property values, get in the way of farming operations like crop-dusting and irrigation, and even create health risks for those living so close to high-voltage wires.

"This is some of our best ground," said Kent Dye, 56, who farms about 7,000 acres in northeast Missouri's Monroe County. "This line - there's no proven need for it. There are no contracts to provide power, no contracts to sell on the other

end."

Then there are property rights issues. Clean Line filed an application with the Missouri Public Service Commission in January for approval to operate as a public utility, a move that would grant eminent domain rights. Similar approval would be needed in Illinois. Clean Line already operates as a public utility in Kansas and Indiana.

Many along the route worry that a private company could simply take over land that in some cases has been in families for generations.

"We have sacrificed everything for this land," said Jennifer Gatrel, 33, who, along with her husband, Jeff, farms a 430-acre cattle ranch in western Missouri. "We don't go on vacation. We don't go out to eat. Everything we have is tied up in this land. The idea that somebody can come in and take it from us is appalling and it goes against what it is to be an American."

Lawlor said the company prefers not to use eminent domain and wants to reach agreements with landowners. He also cited studies showing that power lines and towers have no effect on property values.

"When they sit down and talk to us and get the information about the reality of the project, I think we're succeeding in clearing the air," he said.

Not as far as Gatrel is concerned.

"There are already significant barriers to farming," Gatrel said. "This would be another major barrier." □

Dubai refinancing deal reached on \$20 billion owed

AYA BATRAWY
Associated Press

DUBAI, United Arab Emirates (AP) — Dubai has reached an agreement with Abu Dhabi and the United Arab Emirates' central bank to extend repayment of \$20 billion of debt it incurred in the lead up to the global financial crisis, the country's official news

agency reported Sunday. Dubai built up more than \$100 billion of dollars in debt to local and international lenders during a rapid building boom that turned the Arabian city from a fishing village into a bustling global business hub with a skyline full of modern skyscrapers.

Despite its ambitious plans

to keep growing and building, Dubai struggled to repay its loans as the global financial crisis battered its economy and property market.

Dubai is one of seven emirates in the UAE, whose economy is forecast to grow by around 4.5 percent this year. Abu Dhabi is home to nearly all of the

42-year-old federation's vast oil reserves and much of its wealth.

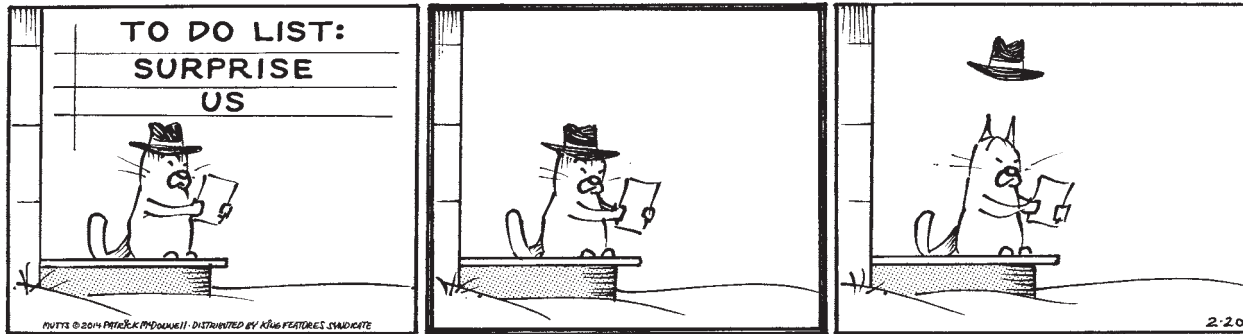
The UAE's official WAM news agency reported that the latest deal gives Dubai five more years to repay the debt at a fixed interest rate of 1 percent. The term is renewable.

The debt consists of a \$10 billion loan from the oil-

rich emirate of Abu Dhabi, which is also the UAE's capital city, and another \$10 billion in central bank bonds.

WAM reported that the agreements are part of "continued efforts to boost the competitiveness of the U.A.E. economy on both regional and international levels." □

Mutts



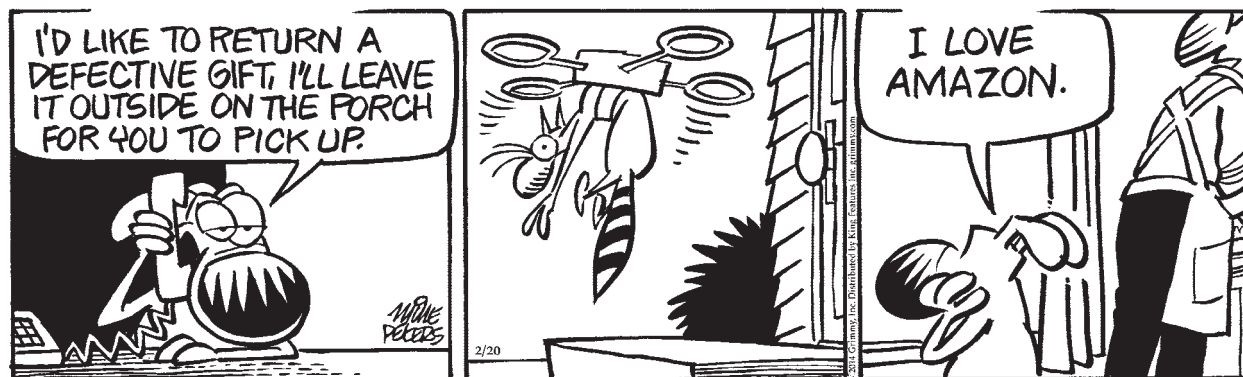
6 Chix



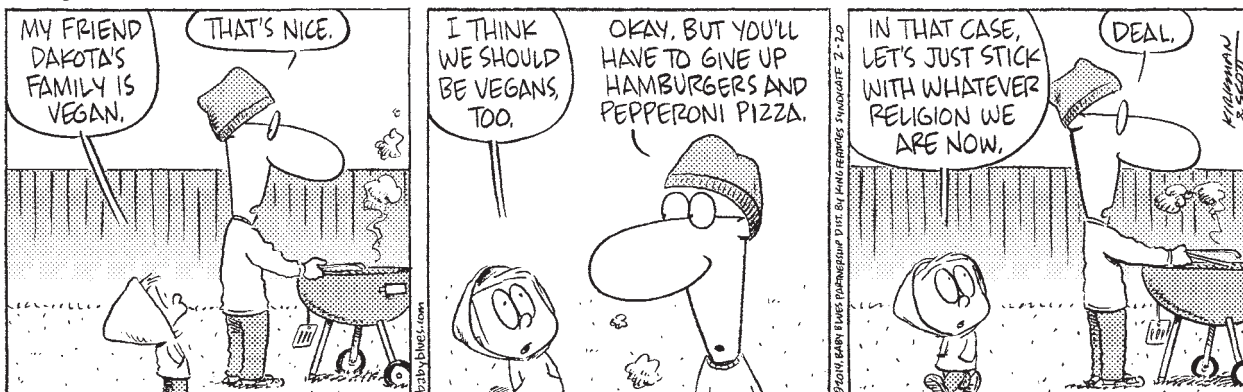
Blondie



Mother Goose & Grimm



Baby Blues



Zits



Conceptis Sudoku

7	6			5			1
		2	9		3	6	8
5	7		2		9		
		9		3		4	7
1	5	2		9	7		
8			6			2	4

Difficulty Level ★★

2/20

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Sunday.

Yesterday's puzzle answer

6	5	7	9	1	2	8	3	4
9	1	8	7	4	3	5	6	2
3	4	2	8	5	6	7	1	9
5	3	9	6	7	1	2	4	8
8	2	6	4	3	9	1	5	7
1	7	4	2	8	5	3	9	6
4	8	5	1	6	7	9	2	3
2	6	3	5	9	8	4	7	1
7	9	1	3	2	4	6	8	5

ACROSS

- Painting and sculpturing
- Participate in a school bee
- Old magazine title
- Boxing match
- Bert's buddy
- In a lazy way
- Gray wolf
- Screwdriver ingredient
- Merriment
- Came forth
- Shuns
- Traveler's stop
- Shoe sole ridge
- French farewell
- Happiness
- Adolescents
- Uncle ___ Rice
- Layer of turf
- In ___; refusing to face reality
- CBS competitor
- Dispute settler
- Pass away
- Pie bottoms
- Pros opposite
- Beatles movie
- 24 ___ gold
- ___ up; bind
- At ___; in the beginning
- Like measles, the flu & many other diseases
- Cry
- Observes
- Like income you report on a Form 1040
- Deserve; merit
- Blaze residue
- Bedspring, e.g.
- Hoodlum
- Lunch & dinner
- Actor Azaria
- Takes to court
- Deviously
- Makes angry

1	2	3	4		5	6	7	8	9		10	11	12	13
14					15						16			
17					18						19			
20					21				22		23			
				24				25						
26	27	28			29				30		31	32	33	
34					35				36					
37					38				39			40		
41				42					43			44		
45									46			47		
				48		49			50					
51	52	53						54				55	56	57
58						59		60				61		
62						63						64		
65						66						67		

Created by Jacqueline E. Mathews

2/20/14

Wednesday's Puzzle Solved

PRODS	ISLE	MALI
AUDIO	BOAR	IRON
STORM	SODA	NOVA
THREATEN	SEAMEN	
CLAN	DEGRADE	
CURTIS	LEDGE	
USO	ATTIC	STABS
BEAR	YUCKY	SILLO
ADDER	MISER	DUB
TAROT	MESSES	
ARBITER	BEAU	
COURSE	HANDBILL	
OGRE	CROC	EDDIE
RUSE	HUNK	RULES
NETS	ONES	SEEDS

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2/20/14

- | | |
|-------------------|--------------------|
| 35 Yrbk. section | 50 Impudent |
| 36 Lion's lair | 51 Hair coverings |
| 38 Upper room | 52 Hawaiian island |
| 39 Foot digit | 53 Real; genuine |
| 42 Nest egg | 54 Blab |
| 44 Small grill | 55 Wild hog |
| 46 Fez dangle | 56 Chain piece |
| 47 Michael J. ___ | 57 BPOE folks |
| 49 Widens a hole | 60 Dobbin's dinner |

Goodyear unveils next-generation blimp, seeks name



This photo taken Feb. 28, 2014, shows Zeppelin and Goodyear crews work together in prepping Goodyear's new zeppelin in the Wingfoot Lake Hangar for its debut in Suffield Township, Ohio. Associated Press

AKRON, Ohio (AP) — The next generation of the well-known Goodyear blimp is getting ready to take flight as the company moves toward replacing its old fleet of airships with a new trio. The helium-filled airship, assembled at an Akron-area hangar and unveiled there Friday, is bigger, quicker and more maneuverable than earlier models, Goodyear Tire & Rubber Co. said. The 246-foot (75-meter) airship fits 12 passengers and has a semi-rigid internal skeleton, a feature that wasn't present in earlier models and raises questions about whether it is truly a blimp, though the company still refers to it as such. The structure is covered by a silver, balloon-like body emblazoned with Goodyear's yellow logo on a blue background. It can travel at up to 73 mph (117 kph) and has custom computer-controlled avionics, an upgrade from the manual flight system used by the blimp pilots since the 1920s, the company said. It plans to build two more. A spokesman wouldn't specify the cost of the new airship, which is expected to provide a longer flight range and better aerial broadcast capabilities for event coverage. □

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Fish-eating ducks hard hit by severe winter, ice

MARY ESCH

Associated Press

DELMAR, New York (AP)

— The Niagara River corridor from Lake Erie to Lake Ontario is renowned as a spectacular winter haven for hundreds of thousands of water birds. But this year's bitterly cold season has made it notable for something else: dead ducks.

Biologists say carcasses began piling up by the hundreds in early January after the plunging temperatures started icing over nearly the entire Great Lakes, preventing the ducks from getting to the minnows that are their main source of food. Necropsies on dozens of birds have confirmed the cause: starvation.

"All have empty stomachs. They're half the weight they should be," said Connie Adams, a biologist in the state Department of Environmental Conservation's Buffalo office who has personally seen 950



In this Tuesday, Dec. 13, 2011 file photo a rhino stands in a road as tourists approach in a truck near Kruger National Park near Hazyview, South Africa.

Associated Press

dead birds.

"This is unprecedented. Biologists who've worked here for 35 years have never seen anything like this," she said. "We've seen a decline in tens of thousands in our weekly waterfowl counts."

It's a phenomenon that has been seen elsewhere along the Great Lakes, with news reports of diving ducks and other waterfowl

turning up dead by the hundreds along the southern part of Lake Michigan. They've also been found in Lake St. Clair between Lakes Erie and Huron.

"It's a hard winter for ducks, like everything else," said Russ Mason, wildlife director with the Michigan Department of Natural Resources.

Most of the dead ducks seen in the upstate New

York are red-breasted mergansers, which breed in northern Canada and Alaska and come south for the winter to the Great Lakes region. In most years, there are periods of freezing and thawing, providing enough breaks in the ice for them to dive for minnows.

But this winter, it's been so bitterly cold for so long that the ice had pushed across 92.2 percent of the Great Lakes' surface area earlier this month, according to federal monitors, just short of the record 94.7 percent set in 1979.

Biologists say the Niagara River also has ice extending up to 100 yards (meters) off shore, creating a shelf where minnows and shiners can hide.

There is evidence some waterfowl gave up and tried to fly farther south but were too weak to do so. Dead birds have been seen along shorelines, on docks and on the ice, their carcasses feasted upon by gulls and bald eagles.

Two weeks ago, Adams said, there were 240,000 water birds in her area's weekly count. Last week, there were 43,000. It's unknown how many birds — which also included such species as scaup, canvasbacks and grebes — migrated elsewhere and how many died.

At the DEC's Wildlife Health Unit near Albany, biologist Joe Okoniewski has refrigerators stuffed with bags of red-breasted mergansers sent by wildlife biologists on Lakes Erie and Ontario. The diving ducks are black and white with a rusty speckled breast, orange bill and an iridescent green head with a shaggy crest on the back.

"The skin is stuck tight to the body wall because there's no layer of fat underneath," Okoniewski said, running a scalpel along the breastbone of a dead merganser. The gizzard and intestine were empty, except for a few normal parasites. □

American philanthropist funds rhino protection

CHRISTOPHER TORCHIA

Associated Press

JOHANNESBURG (AP) — A

son of investor Warren Buffett has pledged nearly \$24 million for protecting rhinos in South Africa, earmarking the money for ranger teams, sniffer dogs and other security measures in what he hopes can be a robust model for fighting what he calls the "overwhelming" problem of poaching in parts of Africa. Howard Buffett said Friday that the three-year program in one-third of the vast Kruger National Park, which struggles to contain poachers crossing from

neighboring Mozambique, will employ some of the same methods used by the United States to monitor its border with Mexico. They include aerostats, large, tethered balloons with infrared cameras that can scan the landscape around the clock.

"We're going to do it at a scale that hasn't been done," Buffett said in an interview with The Associated Press. He described the initiative, which will also focus on cross-border criminal investigations and intelligence networks, as way of learning "what works and what doesn't work" in

a southern area of the park that has 4,000 rhinos. South African is home to most of the continent's rhinos.

Buffett acknowledged that the \$23.7 million initiative doesn't directly address soaring demand for rhino horn in Vietnam and other parts of Asia where it is viewed as a status symbol and a healing agent for serious illness, although there is no evidence that rhino horn, made from the same material as fingernails, is an effective medicine.

"I have no illusions about this," said Buffett, who announced the initiative with the South African national parks service at Standard Bank headquarters in Johannesburg. "This is an overwhelming issue."

Parts of a fence once separating Kruger park from a national park on the Mozambican side were removed a decade ago to encourage wildlife migration, but the surge in rhino poaching has prompted



In this Tuesday, Dec. 13, 2011 file photo a rhino stands in a road as tourists approach in a truck near Kruger National Park near Hazyview, South Africa.

Associated Press

some calls to restore the barrier. The South African government said Friday that poachers had killed 172 rhinos so far this year, two-thirds of them in Kruger park. Last year, 1,004 rhinos were poached in South Africa, three times as many as in 2010.

Buffett's Illinois-based foundation aims to assist poor

communities around the world, including in areas torn by conflict. It views poaching in Africa, particularly of elephant ivory, as part of a broader problem in which armed groups such as the Lord's Resistance Army, which originated in Uganda, get funding from the illegal trade. □

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Fetching 'Peabody & Sherman' top box office

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Chasing down the top spot at the box office after debuting at No. 2 last week, "Mr. Peabody & Sherman" took the lead in its second weekend.

The DreamWorks animated film about the time-traveling adventures of a genius dog and the human son he adopted earned \$21.2 million, according to studio estimates Sunday. The 3-D kiddie-jaunt features voices from "Modern Family" stars Ty Burrell and Ariel Winter.

"Our mid-week numbers were very strong indicating good and positive word of mouth," said Chris Aronson, president of domestic distribution at Twentieth Century Fox. "If anything, this is exceeding (expectations). It's a combination of likable characters and it's a nostalgia play for those who are familiar with the show."

Mr. Peabody and Sherman first appeared in the 1950s and early 1960s on the show "Peabody's Improbable History," a segment within the animated television series "Rocky and His Friends" and later "The Bullwinkle Show."

"The family marketplace is giving every other genre a run for its money," said Paul Dergarabedian, senior media analyst for box-office tracker Rentrak. "But the St. Patrick's Day effect could be at play here, where families had to exercise their options at the theater rather than the pub. That may have paid off for 'Mr. Peabody.'"

Warner Bros.' warrior drama "300: Rise of an Empire," the 3-D sequel to the original, 2007's "300," dropped to second place with \$19.1 million after debuting at No. 1 last weekend. Though its opening haul (\$45.1 million) pales in comparison to the original, which debuted with \$70.9 million, "Rise of an Empire" has earned over \$78 million over both weekends. Starring "Breaking Bad" alum Aaron Paul, Disney's street racer thrill, "Need for Speed," based on the popular EA Entertainment

video game, drove into third place with \$17.8 million.

Tyler Perry's "The Single Moms Club," starring Nia Long and Amy Smart, rounded out the top five, opening with \$8.3 million. "This is one of Tyler Perry's lowest debuts ever, but he cranks out hits every year for almost decade," Dergarabedian said. "He's allowed a couple of missteps every once in a while."

Another of the weekend's hits, the Liam Neeson's "Non-Stop," earned \$10.6 million in its third week at the multiplex. The Universal Pictures thriller also stars "12 Years a Slave" Oscar-winner Lupita Nyong'o.

Continuing to hold a spot in the top 10, Warner Bros.' "The Lego Movie" came in at No. 6, gaining \$7.7 million in its sixth weekend.

That brings the stop-motion 3-D animation's domestic total to \$236.9 million. Leading the year's early trend of films about religion, Fox's "Son of God" grossed \$5.4 million in its third weekend. Russell Crowe's "Noah" will continue the biblical thread at the theater on March 28. The Ridley Scott-directed "Exodus," starring Christian Bale as Moses, will debut later this year.

Playing in only 66 theaters, Wes Anderson's "Grand Budapest Hotel," landed at No. 8 with \$3.6 million. When it opened last weekend, the stylish comedy showed on just four screens in New York and Los Angeles. Still, it impressed with \$200,000.

Rounding out the top 10 is the Kristen Bell-starring "Veronica Mars," the first high-profile project to gain funding from a Kickstarter campaign. The cult show-turned-feature debuted with \$2 million.

Sci-fi action movie "Divergent," based on the Veronica Roth's young adult novel and starring Shailene Woodley, Theo James and Kate Winslet, stands to knock every other film a place or two down when it debuts next weekend. □



This image released by DreamWorks Animation shows Sherman, voiced by Max Charles, left, and Mr. Peabody, voiced by Ty Burrell, in a scene from the animated film, "Mr. Peabody & Sherman." Associated Press

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In this May 8, 2008 file photo, members of Kiss, from left, Paul Stanley, Eric Singer, Gene Simmons and Tommy Thayer, poses for a photograph during a news conference to promote the start of their KISS Alive/35 European Tour in Oberhausen, Germany. **Associated Press**

MESFIN FEKADU
AP Music Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — Paul Stanley of Kiss wants to shout it out loud: The band is miffed at the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame for not inducting members Eric Singer and Tommy Thayer along with the original line-

up.

Kiss is scheduled to be inducted into the Rock Hall on April 10 in New York City. But Stanley said in an interview Friday with The Associated Press that he doesn't think the Rock Hall is being fair and that the organization has altered

Paul Stanley: Kiss miffed at Rock Hall over snub

their rules for other acts. "We have continuing issues with the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, starting with the fact that they chose to only induct the original lineup when that's hardly the case with other bands," he said from Los Angeles. "In the Grateful Dead's case, (they) also inducted a writer who never played an instrument," said Stanley, referring to Robert Hunter's inclusion when the band was inducted in 1994. "Or they've inducted rap artists, or they've inducted people who have been in the band for seven years as opposed to ... 25 years or 20 years — whatever their criteria of this

week is."

A representative for the Rock Hall didn't immediately return an email seeking comment. Acts become eligible for induction 25 years after the release of their first record. Kiss wrote on its website last month that it would not perform at the Rock Hall induction. The original members from 1973 — Stanley, Gene Simmons, Peter Criss and Ace Frehley — are scheduled for induction. Criss left the band in 1980 and Frehley left in 1982. Other members joined during the 1980s, but the current lineup includes Singer, who joined in 1992, and Thayer, who came on board in 2003. Stanley, 62, said the Rock Hall "tried to strong-arm us into playing in original lineup," but the band wouldn't do so. "Their craving of nostalgia or for wanting to have us play by their rules in many ways jeopardizes what we have spent 40 years building," he said. "I've been there since the beginning, and when I put on

my Kiss gear, I do it with great pride, and anything that may jeopardize that by going out with a lineup that I might question is a nonstarter for me." Thayer and Singer should be inducted, he said, because they "have been in the band for decades and played on multiplatinum albums and toured the world." He ended with this: "So, in this case, very clearly the tail doesn't wag the dog, and Kiss is a big dog, and the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame is a small tail." Nirvana, Peter Dinklage, Hall and Oates, Linda Ronstadt and Cat Stevens will also be inducted at the 29th-annual Rock and Roll Hall of Fame induction ceremony at the Barclays Center. Rolling Stones manager Andrew Loog Oldham and the late Beatles manager Brian Epstein will receive Ahmet Ertegun awards, a nonperforming honor. And Bruce Springsteen's E Street Band will get an award for musical excellence. The event will air in May on HBO. □

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Comedian David Brenner, 'Tonight' favorite, dies

LYNN ELBER

AP Television Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) — David Brenner, the gangly, toothy-grinned "Tonight Show" favorite whose brand of observational comedy became a staple for other standup comedians, including Jerry Seinfeld and Paul Reiser, died Saturday. He was 78. Brenner, who had been fighting cancer, died peacefully at his home in New York City with his family at his side, according to Jeff Abraham, his friend and publicist. "David Brenner was a huge star when I met him and he took me under his wing. To me, historically, he was the godfather of hip, observational comedy," comedi-

an Richard Lewis said in a statement. "He mentored me from day one. ... His passing leaves a hole in my life that can never be replaced." Brenner's stand-up routines became a favorite of "Tonight Show" host Johnny Carson starting in the 1970s. His 150-plus "Tonight Show" appearances turned the former documentary filmmaker into a hot comedian. Brenner was a regular on other TV talk shows and game shows and starred in four HBO comedy specials. He also briefly hosted his own syndicated talk show in 1987. He moved with the times, trading routines about the humor of everyday life for jokes about social and political issues. □

Go West, young people! and East!



Nicholas Kristof
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I'm delighted to announce that the winner of my 2014 "win-a-trip" contest is ...

Oh, hang on. Maybe I should first exhort students to travel on their own - and cite Utah.

Utah may well be the most cosmopolitan state in America. Vast numbers of young Mormons - increasingly women as well as men - spend a couple of years abroad as missionaries and return jabbering in Thai or Portuguese and bearing a wealth of international experience.

More than 130 languages are spoken daily in commerce in Utah, according to the University of Utah, and that's one reason it sometimes tops the Forbes list of best states to do business. The state is a center for trade and for global companies.

American universities should also be sending people abroad, but they are still quite insular. The number of Americans studying abroad has tripled over the past 20 years, but, still, fewer than 10 percent of college students study overseas during undergraduate years. Three times as many foreigners study in America as the other way around.

(A shout-out goes to Goucher College in Baltimore, which requires students to study abroad. Others should try that.)

All young Americans should learn Spanish - el idioma extranjero de mayor importancia en los Estados Unidos - partly because growing numbers of seniors will finance retirement by moving to cheaper countries like Mexico, Nicaragua and Costa Rica. Yet it makes no sense to study Spanish on a college campus when it is so much cheaper and more exhilarating to move to Bolivia, study or get a job and fall in love with a Bolivian.

It's also more effective. I have a one-question language test that people who have lived abroad do better on than those who studied in a classroom. Try my test yourself: In a foreign language you've studied, how do you say "doorknob"?

As you're looking blank and thinking of those four wasted years studying French (poignée de porte) or Spanish (pomo), consider this joke: If someone who speaks three languages is trilingual, and a person who speaks four languages is quadrilingual, what is a person called

who speaks no foreign language at all?

Answer: An American.

One of the aims of higher education is to broaden perspectives, and what better way than by a home stay in a really different country, like Bangladesh or Senegal? Time abroad also leaves one more aware of the complex prism of suspicion through which the United States is often viewed. If more Americans had overseas experience, our foreign policy might be wiser.

That's partly why I started my win-a-trip contest. I wanted to encourage American students to engage more with the world and with the issue of global poverty. So I'm pleased to announce that my win-a-trip winner, from the University of Notre Dame, is ... But wait! First, a personal aside. I took a gap year myself after high school and worked on a farm near Lyon, France. I stayed with the Vallet family, picked and packed fruit, and discovered that red wine can be a breakfast drink. That led to further travel as a university student. I slept on the floor of Indian temples and rode on the tops of Sudanese trains, and the experiences changed me by opening my eyes to human needs and to human universals.

Gap years are becoming a bit more common in the United States and are promoted by organizations like Global Citizen Year. Colleges tend to love it when students defer admission to take a gap year because those students arrive with more maturity and less propensity to spend freshman year in an alcoholic haze.

Here's a suggestion: How about if colleges gave students a semester credit for a gap year spent in a non-English-speaking country? There's a misconception that gap years or study-abroad opportunities are feasible only for the affluent. There are lots of free options (and some paid ones) at idealist.org, which lists volunteering opportunities all over the world. It's also often possible to make money teaching English on the side.

So go west, young men and women! And go east! Y al norte y al sur!

Back to my win-a-trip contest: I'm delighted to announce that my winner is Nicole Sganga, a 20-year-old from Long Island and the University of Notre Dame. Nicole is a junior majoring in political science and film and has already worked for CBS News in Washington and London.

I'm not sure yet where we'll travel for our reporting together on neglected issues. Perhaps Congo. Maybe Myanmar. I welcome your suggestions on my blog, nytimes.com/ontheground, for places to go and themes to cover.

Thanks to the Center for Global Development for helping screen applications, and to all the students who applied. If you didn't win, I hope you'll go out and win your own trip! □



The 3 faces of President Obama



Thomas L. Friedman
© 2014 New York Times News Service

President Barack Obama is surely the first president to be accused of acting in foreign policy like Pollyanna, John Wayne and Henry Kissinger in the same month.

Ever since Russian President Vladimir Putin's land grab in Crimea, conservatives have denounced Obama as a man who doesn't appreciate what a merciless, Hobbesian world this really is. He's a Pollyanna - always looking for people's good side. Meanwhile, liberals have been hammering Obama for what they say is his trigger-happy drone habit, having ordered the targeted killing by air of hundreds of individuals; he's John Wayne, seeking vigilante justice against those who have harmed, or might be planning to harm, the United States. And, just to round things out, Obama has been accused by critics on the left and right of being a Kissingerian hyperrealist who is content to watch the Syrian regime crush its people, because, as tragic as that is, American interests there are minimal. It can't be easy being Pollyanna, John Wayne and Henry Kissinger all at once. So who is Obama - really - on foreign policy? I'd say less Pollyanna than his critics claim, more John Wayne and Henry Kissinger than he'd admit, but still undefined when it comes to the greatest leadership challenges in foreign policy - which go beyond Crimea but lurk just over the horizon.

If Obama has been a reluctant warrior in Crimea, it's because it's long been part of Russia and home to a Russian naval base, with many of its people sympathetic to Russia. Obama was right to deploy the limited sanctions we have in response to Putin's seizure of Crimea and try to coolly use diplomacy to prevent a wider war over Ukraine - because other forces are at play on

Putin. Do not underestimate how much of a fool Putin will make of himself in Crimea this weekend - in front of the whole world - and how much this will blow back on Russia, whose currency and stock markets are getting hammered as a result of Vladimir's Crimean adventure.

Putin has organized, basically overnight, a secession referendum on Crimea's future - without allowing any time for the opposition to campaign. It's being held under Russian military occupation, in violation of Ukraine's Constitution, with effectively two choices on the ballot: "Vote 1 if you want to become part of Russia," or "Vote 2 if you really want to become part of Russia." This is not the action of a strong, secure leader. By Monday, it should have its own Twitter hashtag: #Putinfarce.

And if Obama has been a Kissingerian realist in his reluctance to dive into the Syrian civil war, or Ukraine, it's because he has learned from Iraq and Afghanistan that the existence of bad guys in these countries doesn't mean that their opponents are all good guys. Too many leaders in all these countries turned out to be more interested in using their freedom to loot rather than liberate. Where authentic reformers emerge in Syria or Ukraine we should help them, but, unlike Sen. John McCain, most Americans are no longer willing to be suckers for anyone who just sings our song (see dictionary for Hamid Karzai), and they are now wary of owning the bailouts and gas bills of countries we don't understand.

As for John Wayne Obama, "the quickest drone in the West," every American president needs a little of that in today's world, where you now have legions of superempowered angry people who wish America

ill and who have access to rockets and live in ungoverned spaces. So I have no problem with Obama as John Wayne or Henry Kissinger. If you want to criticize or praise him on foreign policy, the real tests fall into two categories: 1) How good is he at leading from behind on Ukraine? And 2) How good is he at leading from in front on Russia, Iran and China? There is probably no saving Crimea from Putin in the short term, but we do not want

to see him move beyond Crimea and absorb the parts of eastern Ukraine where the Russophones reside. We should be ready to offer arms to the Ukrainian government to prevent that. But let us never lose sight of the fact that the key to keeping more of Ukraine out of Russia's paws will depend on the ability of Ukrainians to come together in a way that is inclusive of both the majority that sees its future with the European Union and the minority of Russophones who still feel some affinity for Russia.

If the Ukraine drama pits a united Ukraine - seeking a noncorrupt democracy tied to Europe - against a Putin trying to forcibly reintegrate Ukraine into a Russian empire, Putin loses. But if Ukrainians are divided, if hyper-nationalist parties there dominate and pro-Russians are alienated, Putin will discredit the Ukraine liberation movement and use the divisions to justify his own interventions. Then our help will be useless. We can't help them if they won't help themselves. Ukrainians have already wasted a quarter-century not getting their act together the way Poland did.

The big three issues where Obama must lead from the front are: changing the character of Russia's government, preventing Iran from getting a nuke and preventing a war in the South China Sea between Beijing and Tokyo. I will save China and Iran for later. But regarding Russia, I vehemently opposed NATO expansion because I held the view then, and hold it today, that there is no big geopolitical problem that we can solve without Russia's cooperation. That requires a Russia that does not define its greatness by opposing us and recreating the Soviet empire, but by unleashing the greatness of its people. It is increasingly clear that that will never be Putin's Russia, which stands for wholesale corruption, increasing repression and a zero-sum relationship with the West. Putin is looking for dignity for Russia now in all the wrong places - and ways. But only Russia's people can replace Putinism. The way the United States and European Union help, which will take time, is by forging new energy policies that will diminish Europe's dependency on Russian gas - the mother's milk of Putinism. □

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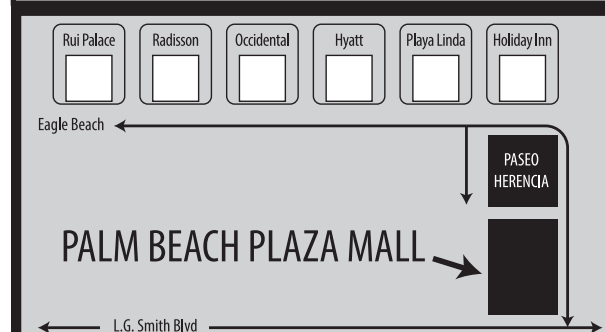
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February 1944. The Allied victory of World War II was commemorated by an Aruba Festival - a large parade in San Nicolas comprised largely of Caribbean-English immigrants who came to Aruba to work at the Lago Oil Refinery. The first steel and brass bands debuted a few years later and small parades sprout-

ed here and there. Tonight at 8PM, Palm Beach Plaza Mall will have a great Carnival Show where you can experience for yourself the taste of Aruba's Carnival culture with the opportunity to take pictures with the majestic carnival dancers with carnival costumes. Come and enjoy the show! □